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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/769,920	02/03/2004	Shinji Hayashi	086142-0633	9767
22428	7590	09/07/2007		
FOLEY AND LARDNER LLP SUITE 500 3000 K STREET NW WASHINGTON, DC 20007			EXAMINER SLITERIS, JOSELYNN Y	
			ART UNIT 3616	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 09/07/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/769,920	Applicant(s) HAYASHI ET AL.	
	Examiner Joselynn Y. Sliteris	Art Unit 3616	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 June 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 29-49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 38-42, 44 and 45 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 29-37, 43 and 46-49 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Acknowledgement

1. Examiner acknowledges receipt of applicant's Amendment to the Claims (entered 6/12/07).

Election/Restrictions

2. Claims 38-42, 44, and 45 remain withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on 4/18/06.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 29-37, 43, and 46-49 are objected to because of the following informalities: in claim 29 line 13, "recess" should be deleted; in claim 32 line 1, "recess" should be deleted; in claim 46, line 9, "recess" should be deleted; in claim 48 line 2, "recess" should be deleted. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 29-32, 34-37, 43, and 46-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Uehara et al. (U.S. Patent 6,113,131), as cited by applicant.

6. Regarding claims 29-32, 34-37, and 43, Uehara discloses a method of making a cover component 31A (Figs. 4A, 4B) mountable to an airbag system, as in the present invention, the cover component having a tear line 31a, 31b that is torn open when an airbag of the airbag system inflates, comprising:

providing a die having a core surface having a raised line formed on the core surface;

providing a moldable material 31A;

molding said moldable material using said die so as to form a molded material having a recessed line 31b corresponding to said raised line, the recessed line extending in a line and having a first end, a central portion with opposing sides, and a second end (see annotated Figs. 4A, 4B attached);

providing a laser, and

irradiating said molded material using said laser so as to bore a plurality of hollows 31a in said recessed line along the central portion in said molded material at intervals, and;

wherein a bottom recess of the recessed line at the first and or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope inclined relative to a back of the cover component;

further comprising the step of attaching said molded material to said airbag system;

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wherein the tear line 31a, 31b extends in an H shape (Figs. 1A, 4A);

wherein the bottom recess of the recessed line near the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope about 30° to 60° inclined relative to the back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4B attached);

wherein the recessed line decreases in depth gradually toward the first or second end of the tear line;

wherein the tear line further comprises a region of reduced strength shaped so that the tear line is torn open in said region of reduced strength when the airbag inflates;

wherein the region of reduced strength is deeper than other parts of the recessed line;

wherein the region of reduced strength includes at least one hollow that has approximately the same depth as at least one hollow of another part of the recessed line;

wherein the region of reduced strength comprises at least a first hollow that has a ceiling that is approximately equidistant to a front surface of the cover component as a ceiling of at least a second hollow of another part of the recessed line.

7. Regarding claims 46-48, Uehara discloses a method of manufacturing a cover component 31A as in the present invention, the cover component having a tear line 31a, 31b that is torn open when an airbag of the airbag system inflates, comprising:

forming a recessed line 31b at least in a part of the tear line by using a

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raised line provided on a core surface of a die when the cover component is molded, the recessed line extending in a line and having a first end, a central portion with opposing sides, and a second end (see annotated Figs. 4A, 4B attached); and

boring hollows 31a in the recessed line at intervals by laser processing;

wherein a bottom recess of the recessed line at the first and or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope inclined relative to a back of the cover component;

wherein the tear line extends in an H shape (Figs. 1A, 4A);

wherein the bottom recess of the recessed line near the first or second end of the recessed line is formed in a slope about 30° to 60° inclined relative to the back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4B attached).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 29-37, 43, and 46-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sawada et al. (U.S. Patent 5,195,773) in view of Uehara et al. (U.S. Patent 6,113,131), both cited by applicant.

10. Regarding claims 29-37 and 43, Sawada discloses a method of making a cover component 100 mountable to an airbag system, as in the present invention, the cover

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component having a tear line 2-4 that is torn open when an airbag of the airbag system inflates, comprising:

- providing a die having a core surface having a raised line formed on the core surface;

- providing a moldable material 100;

- molding said moldable material using said die so as to form a molded material having a recessed line 5 corresponding to said raised line, the recessed line extending in a line and having a first end, a central portion 2 with opposing sides, and a second end (see annotated Fig. 1 attached);

- a plurality of hollows 6 in said recessed line along the central portion in said molded material at intervals (Figs. 2, 3);

- wherein a bottom recess of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope inclined relative to a back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4 attached);

- further comprising the step of attaching said molded material to said airbag system;

- wherein the tear line 2-4 extends in an H shape (Fig. 1);

- wherein the bottom recess of the recessed line near the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope about 30° to 60° inclined relative to the back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4 attached);

- wherein the hollows 6 extend only partially through the cover component 100;

wherein the recessed line decreases in depth gradually toward the first or second end of the tear line (Fig. 4);

wherein the tear line further comprises a region of reduced strength shaped so that the tear line is torn open in said region of reduced strength when the airbag inflates;

wherein the region of reduced strength is deeper than other parts of the recessed line;

wherein the region of reduced strength includes at least one hollow 6 that has approximately the same depth as at least one hollow 6 of another part of the recessed line;

wherein the region of reduced strength comprises at least a first hollow that has a ceiling that is approximately equidistant to a front surface of the cover component as a ceiling of at least a second hollow of another part of the recessed line.

But Sawada does not disclose providing a laser, and irradiating the molded material using the laser so as to bore the plurality of hollows in the recessed line in the molded material at intervals. Uehara discloses that it is known in the art to provide a laser, and irradiate the molded material 31A using the laser so as to bore a plurality of hollows 31a in the recessed line 31b in the molded material at intervals (Figs. 4A, 4B). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to bore the plurality of hollows in the recessed line in the molded material of Sawada using laser according to the teachings of Uehara, in order to facilitate the formation of the plurality of hollows in the recessed line in the molded material and to do it more economically.

11. Regarding claims 46-49, Sawada discloses a method of manufacturing a cover component 100 as in the present invention, the cover component having a tear line 2-4 that is torn open when an airbag of the airbag system inflates, comprising:

forming a recessed line 5 at least in a part of the tear line by using a raised line provided on a core surface of a die when the cover component is molded, the recessed line extending in a line and having a first end, a central portion 2 with opposing sides, and a second end (see annotated Fig. 1 attached); and

hollows 6 in the recessed line at intervals (Figs. 2, 3);

wherein a bottom recess of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope inclined relative to a back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4 attached);

wherein the tear line extends in an H shape (Fig. 1);

wherein the bottom recess of the recessed line near the first or second end of the recessed line is formed in a slope about 30° to 60° inclined relative to the back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4 attached);

further comprising forming the hollows to extend only partially through the cover component.

But Sawada does not disclose boring the hollows by laser processing. Uehara discloses that it is known in the art to bore the hollows 6 in the recessed line 5 at intervals by laser processing (Figs. 4A, 4B). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to bore the hollows of Sawada in the recessed line by laser processing according to the teachings of Uehara,

in order to facilitate the formation of the hollows in the recessed line and to do it more economically.

Response to Arguments

12. Applicant's arguments filed 6/12/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

13. Applicant argues, in particular, that the "angle or slope allegedly disclosed in Figure 4B is not at the "first or second end of the recessed line." Rather, the annotation on Fig. 4B is a line located on one of the opposing sides of a groove not a first or second end. Thus, Uehara fails to anticipate claim 1".

However, examiner disagrees. Examiner points out that "FIG. 4B is a section view taken along the line D-D of FIG. 4A" as disclosed by Uehara in the "Brief Description of the Drawings". Therefore, the "angle" or slope is shown at the first or second end of the recessed line", in addition to a line located on one of the opposing sides of a groove as can be easily seen in Fig. 4A.

14. Applicant also argues that "Amended claim 29 calls for a method of making a cover component mountable to an airbag system that comprises, among other things, molding a moldable material using a die to form a recessed line, irradiating the molded material with a laser to bore a plurality of hollows, and "wherein a bottom recess of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope inclined relative to a back of the cover component," which Uehara fails to disclose, teach, or suggest. Additionally, Uehara fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a method of

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manufacturing a cover component that comprises, among other things, forming a recessed line by using a raised line provided on a die, boring hollows in the recessed line by laser processing, and wherein "a bottom recess of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope inclined relative to a back of the cover component" as recited by amended claim 46."

Examiner strongly disagrees. Uehara does disclose, teach or suggest a method of making a cover component mountable to an airbag system as claimed in claims 29 and 46, and support for such disclosure can be found in the abstract, drawings, and throughout the specification (at least in column 1 line 48 - column 4 line 4; & column 5 line 66 - column 9 line 40).

15. Applicant argues, in particular, that the "Examiner contends that Figure 4 of Sawada discloses a recessed line molded to form a slope. See Office Action at p. 6. However, Figure 4 of Sawada merely discloses a sloped central portion of a recessed line and not a first or second end. See Figure 4 of Sawada and see Figure 3 of Sawada. Uehara fails to cure the deficiencies of Sawada. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection should be withdrawn."

Again, examiner disagrees. Examiner points out that although Figure 4 discloses a sloped central portion of a recessed line, the slope of the recessed line at the first and/or second end would be applicable as well because of tear lines 3 and 4, which can be seen in Fig. 1.

Conclusion

16. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

17. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joselynn Y. Sliteris whose telephone number is 571-272-6675. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul N. Dickson can be reached on 571-272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

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published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should

you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Joselynn Y. Siteris
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3616
9/4/07

JYS
9/4/07



PAUL N. DICKSON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

FIG. 4 A

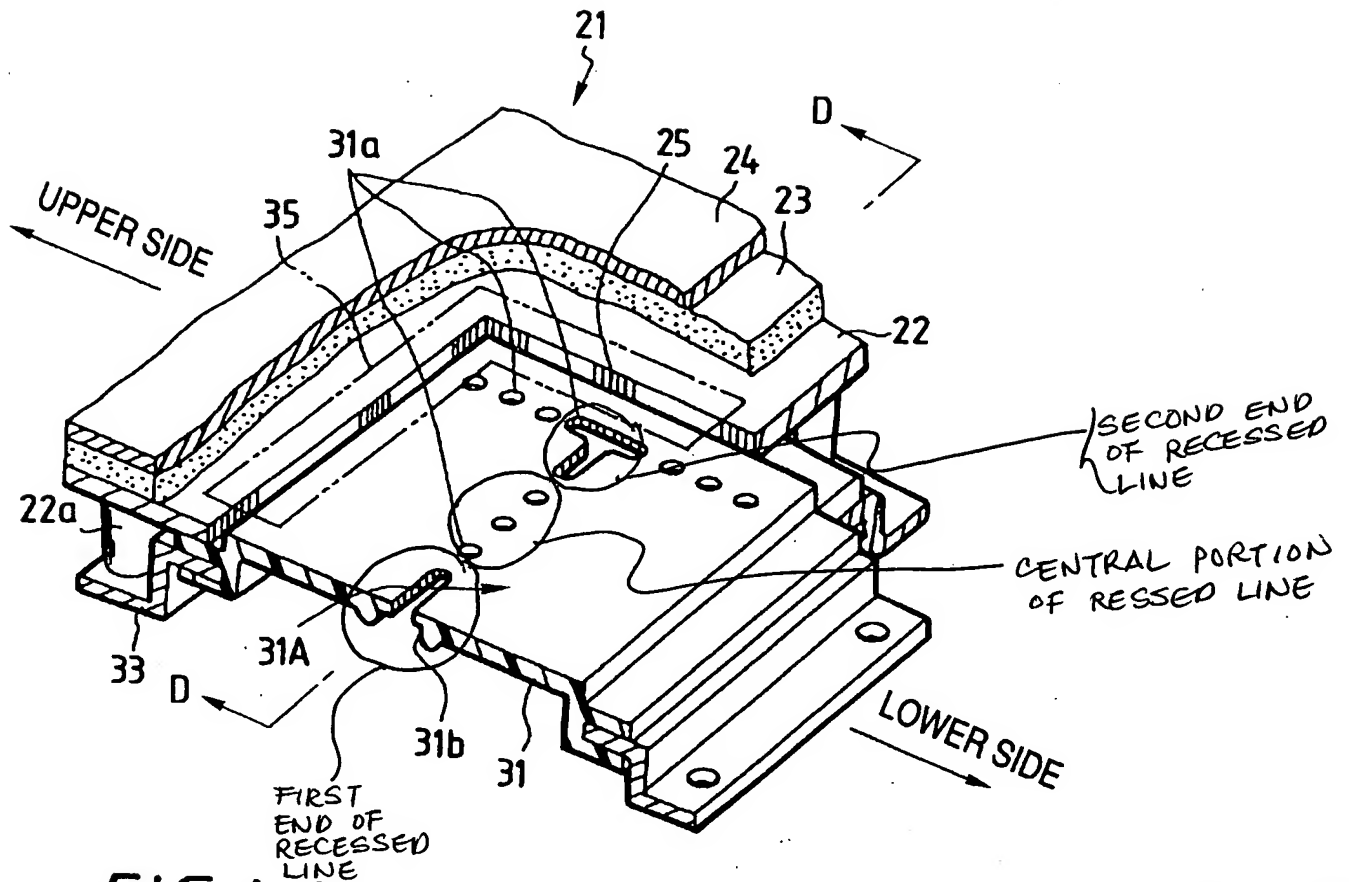
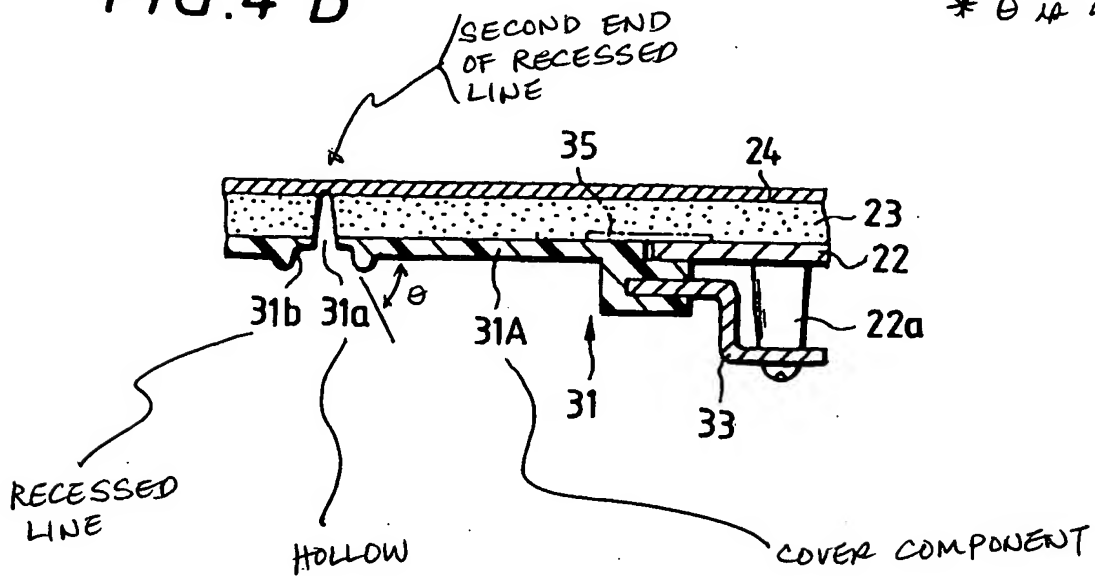


FIG. 4 B



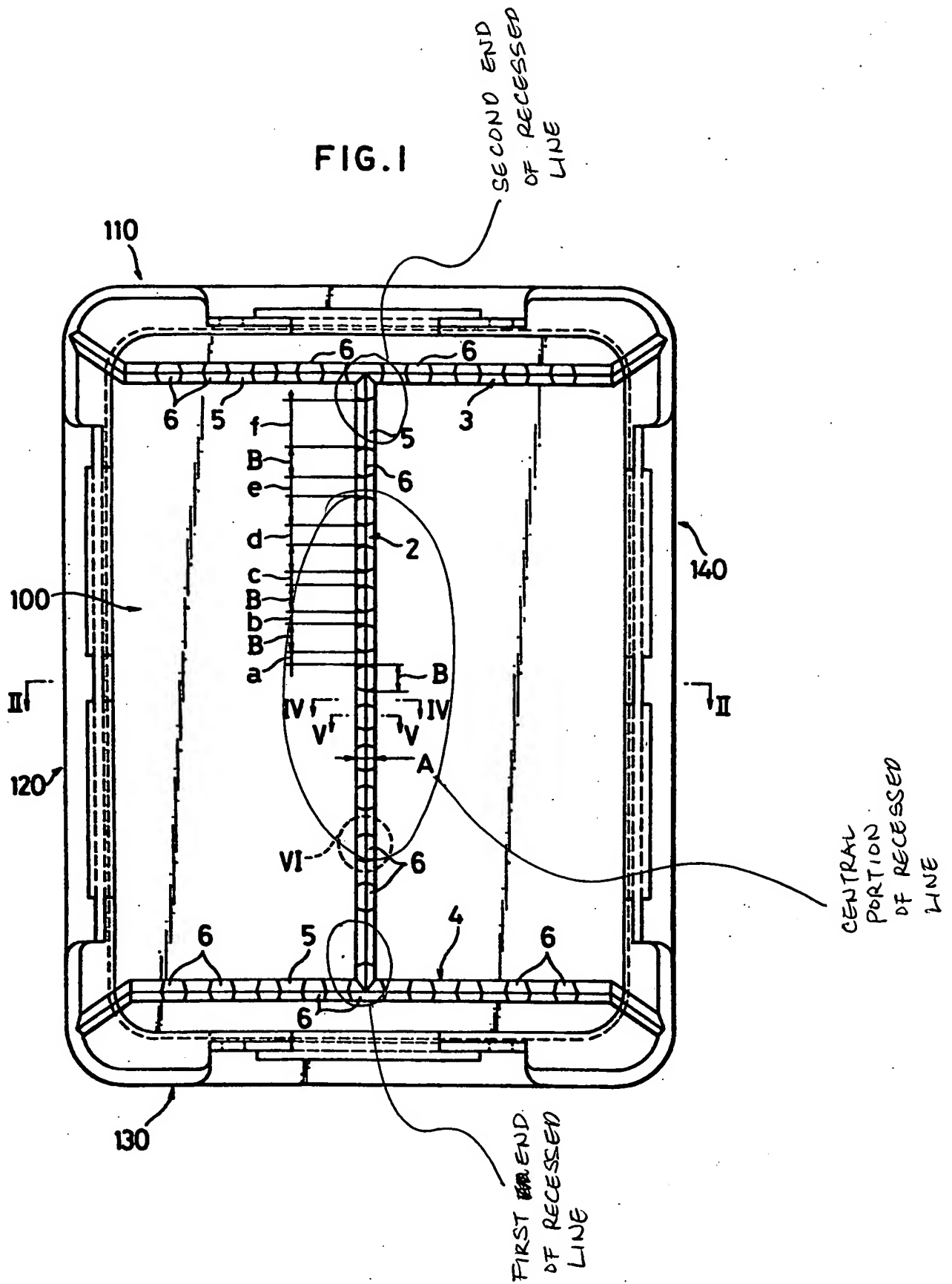


FIG. 2

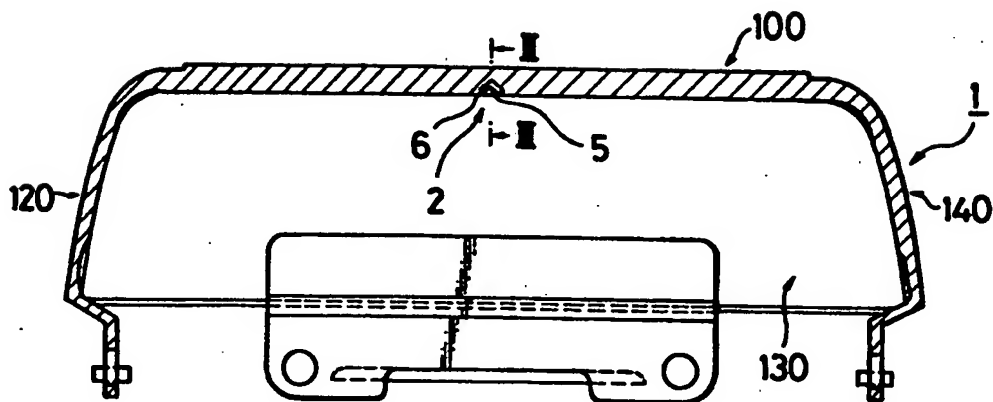


FIG. 3

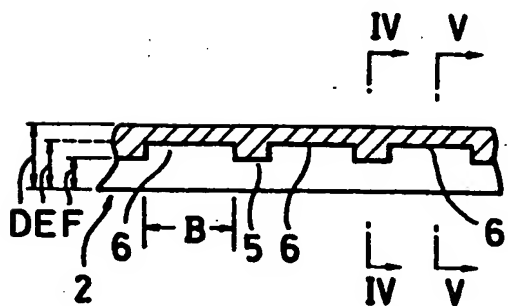
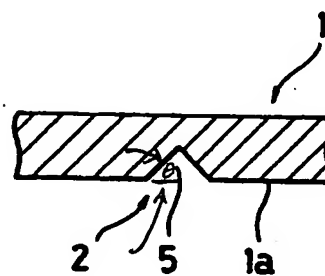


FIG. 4



* θ is about 30° to 60°

FIG. 5A

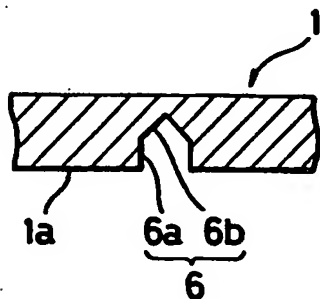


FIG. 5B

